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SUBJECT: FSC FEBRUARY 25: EXPERTS SAY CFE-FROZEN CONFLICTS  
LINK FAILED

11. (SBU) Summary: At the Forum for Security Cooperation on February 25, international security experts from European think tanks agreed that NATO and Europe have been the victims of their own success in structuring a stable security environment for the last twenty years and, now, the security acquis urgently needs adjustment. One expert said NATO's link of ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty to resolution of frozen conflicts through Russian fulfillment of its Istanbul commitments was irretrievably broken. U.S. "disinterest" or benign neglect of European security was partly to blame for the present impasse over CFE and uncertainty over the future shape of the European security architecture.

12. (SBU) Later, Russia announced it would address reopening the Vienna Document at the March 11 FSC. The working group approved the draft decision to extend the deadline for Code of Conduct questionnaire responses to June 15. Russia announced a number of edits to the draft update of the Code of Conduct questionnaire. The FSC Chair recommended the Annual Security Review Conference be held June 23-24. End summary.

Disarmament is Back, but Europe Has Its Own Problems  
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13. (SBU) Wolfgang Zellner, at the Center for OSCE Research at the University of Hamburg, claimed disarmament was "back on the agenda," noting information of the White House website that President Obama is seeking to "achieve dramatic reductions" in the numbers of U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons. Although some, he noted, hoped progress in strategic arms control would lead to improvement of the

current climate for conventional arms control in Europe, this was not a foregone conclusion. Zellner said the needs of the European states were more heterogeneous and the U.S. did not place a high priority on European arms control. It was therefore up to EU states to take the initiative. Zellner added the security issues and conflicts that concern Europe are essentially European, with the possible exception of missile defense.

¶4. (SBU) Zellner included the August 2008 conflict in Georgia and Russia's suspension of CFE implementation among the issues that confront Europe. He decried the mutual mistrust between NATO, which suspects Russia wants to reestablish a sphere influence in the QS area, and Russia, which views NATO enlargement with unease and doubt.

#### Istanbul: Can the Circle Be Squared

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¶5. (SBU) Zellner recommended NATO follow Germany's advice to find a way to modify the Parallel Action Package so that continued insistence on Russian fulfillment of its Istanbul commitments does not derail movement toward the adapted treaty and threaten the survival of the entire CFE regime. He wondered if the Geneva Conference on Georgia could find another course, but doubted any solution would be timely. He noted with approval the Merkel-Sarkozy article that suggested a rapid solution to the Transnistria issue in Moldova was possible.

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#### Link Between A/CFE and Istanbul a Failure

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¶6. (SBU) Zellner asserted that the impasse over A/CFE was linked to sub-regional conflicts, as reflected on the Istanbul commitments and the "flanks" issue. He concluded that the attempt to resolve the issues in Georgia and Moldova by linking them to ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty (A/CFE) was a failure. Europe will, in any case, have to move beyond A/CFE as many of the region's ongoing security issues are not addressed by existing arms control mechanisms. A new model is needed that will ensure pan-European stability at a CFE while resolving and presenting sub-regional conflicts.

#### Medvedev Proposal Faute de Mieux

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¶7. (SBU) Zellner said conventional arms control will be needed to support strategic arms reduction and this relation, when combined with sub-regional conflicts and emerging issues such as missile defense illustrates the inadequacy of the existing negotiating fora. If only because of the need to tie the different security areas together, he endorsed the Medvedev and Sarkozy proposal for a European security conference. Zellner also noted that the current financial crisis is the greatest immediate threat to security for all members of the OSCE, whose weaker members might face economic and even political collapse without international support.

#### Current Acquis Successful, up to a Point

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¶8. (SBU) Camille Grand, director of the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris and formerly the French representative to the "NATO High Level Task Force" on conventional arms control, described the relative success of the current European security arrangements, although he noted existing conflict prevention mechanisms could not prevent the conflict in Georgia. The current security system was undermined by the impasse over CFE and "unilateral" measures. It was no surprise the Russian suspension had led to erosion of the acquis.

¶9. (SBU) Grand said tensions between Russia and the West were at the core of the present crisis. Benign neglect had led to a return to a Cold War mentality that could degenerate into an arms race and the reassertion of spheres of influence modeled on the Westphalian balance of power.

#### Shopping List for Medvedev

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¶10. (SBU) Grand suggested the Medvedev response to these problems, describing it as comprehensive and treaty-based, might be feasible. It would need to balance hard and soft security, as at the OSCE, include Canada and the U.S., uphold values sovereignty, territorial integrity, and restraint from use of force, incorporate existing alliances, and somehow improve on the existing arrangements. This would mean a new European security architecture would still include classic arms control, but would also contain crisis management and

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conflict prevention mechanisms and address new and emerging threats like terrorism, transnational crime, and proliferation.

#### Constructive Mistrust

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¶11. (SBU) Grand argued it was mistake to think mutual trust was a precondition for negotiating a new architecture. A certain amount of "constructive mistrust" might actually be a goad to beginning work. Discussion should be open-ended and should not fixate on the format of an agreement, which might be a treaty or a political declaration or something else: its shape would emerge naturally as a by-product of the negotiations. No issues should be pre-judged and parties should avoid an "all or nothing" approach.

#### CFE Suspension: the Point of No Return

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¶12. (SBU) Zdzislaw Lachowski, at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, observed that while the Adapted CFE Treaty was needed by both Russia and NATO to address post-Cold War realities, the fundamental strength of the existing acquis meant that Europe still felt secure despite the impasse over A/CFE and Russia's suspension. He warned that this situation could not be indefinitely sustained: the treaty's erosion, leading to reduced transparency and the re-emergence of rivalries is bound to reach a point of no return. Lachowski said South Caucasus states and Ukraine have begun to recalculate their security positions should CFE collapse.

#### Asymmetry of Strategic Perspectives

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¶13. (SBU) Lachowski argued that NATO and Russia must overcome the "asymmetry of strategic perspectives" if the CFE crisis is to be resolved. He said U.S. and NATO indifference to Russian perceptions allowed the stalemate to develop. The shift in U.S. focus away from Europe and classic arms control has exacerbated the situation. Some way must be found to bridge NATO's continued insistence on fulfillment of Istanbul commitments with Russia's insistence on defining its own security needs and separating arms control and hard security issues from elections, the rule of law, and energy.

#### Accept No Substitutes

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¶14. (SBU) Lachowski concluded that, despite the almost insuperable obstacles to resolving the impasse over the treaty, the CFE regime remains essential to Europe's continued security and stability. The Vienna Document or bilateral agreements are not adequate substitutes. Russia

seems to recognize this, as it attempts to use its suspension for accelerating movement toward the adapted treaty.

#### Russia: We Just Want to Help

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¶15. (SBU) Russia (Ulyanov) commented that it no longer viewed Istanbul commitments as an obstacle because it had fulfilled

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them: attention should shift instead to commitments made by Georgia and others. Russia did not seek to drive wedges into NATO, which would only enhance the solidarity of the Allies. Instead, Russia sought to restore balance to Europe and viability to conventional arms control. NATO enlargement needs to be compensated for, especially on the flank. Russia, after all, is no more interested in arms control than any other state. Some thought they could use our commitment to arms control against us with regard to the Istanbul commitments, but this has been a failure.

#### Georgia and Moldova Remain Unconvinced

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¶16. (SBU) Georgia asked if any new arrangement could guarantee the security of small states against their more powerful neighbors when Russia had violated all of its existing commitments by invading Georgia in August 2008. Moldova added it did not accept that Russia had fulfilled its Istanbul commitments. Host nation consent and the CFE Treaty continued to be very important to Moldova, and it supported the Parallel Action Plan.

#### Allies' Views

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¶17. (SBU) Germany asked for more focus on the multi-dimensional nature of any new arrangement and suggested a separate discussion soon at the OSCE of the "third dimension" component. The UK agreed that "benign neglect" of the faltering security system had worsened the impasse. Luxembourg declared that all should have seen in 1999 when they agreed to the Istanbul commitments that arms control mechanisms could not resolve intra-state conflicts. A mechanism relevant to such conflicts was still needed.

#### Echoes from the JCG

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¶18. (SBU) Responding to mention of South Caucasus security issues in the experts' presentations, Azerbaijan and Armenia exchanged recriminations over arms holdings in excess of (CFE) treaty limits and unaccounted for treaty limited equipment.

#### Reopening the Vienna Document

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¶19. (SBU) Russia (Ulyanov) announced it intended to initiate discussion of the weaknesses of the Vienna Document 1999 in the March 11 FSC, presumably under the Security Dialogue. Ulyanov noted the document had been amended four times in its first ten years but had not been touched since. Despite the march of time, Ulyanov said, some delegations saw reopening or adjusting the document as taboo: they needed to explain themselves.

#### ASRC Dates

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¶20. (SBU) The FSC Chair's letter to the Permanent Council Chair recommending the Annual Security Review Conference be held June 23-24 was sent without objection, although Turkey

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announced it reserved the right to make an interpretive statement.

#### Code of Conduct

¶21. (SBU) The working group agreed to submit to the plenary a draft decision to extend the deadline for Code of Conduct questionnaire submission from April 15 to June 15 (FSC.DD/1/09).

¶22. (SBU) Russia then announced it had several "technical responses" to the latest version of the draft update of the Code of Conduct questionnaire (FSC.DD/14/08). These included:

- remove the compilation form summarizing responses;
- make optional responses to question 1.4 on efforts to prevent and combat terrorism in addition to those not mentioned in questions 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3;
- remove the words "of war" from the phrase "international humanitarian law of war" from question 4.1;
- insert the word "technical" before the word "update" in the title of the draft decision;
- support for Belarusian proposals for the decision's preamble that would substitute language on the Helsinki Final Act for the existing reference to the principles of the United Nations Charter (FSC.DEL/186/08); and
- change the deadline for the first reply to the updated questionnaire to June 15, possibly adding a provision to excuse states that have already answered the current version from needing to also answer the update.

¶23. (SBU) Belarus welcomed the Russian proposals. Finland reminded it still wants a reference to UNSCR 1325 on the role of gender in security affairs.

¶24. (SBU) The FSC Code of Conduct coordinator (Eischer, Austria) announced an informal meeting on February 27 to review Russian and other proposals for the draft. He will circulate a compilation of these proposals shortly.

#### End Use Certificate Exchange

¶25. (SBU) In response to Denmark's question, the chairman of the Informal Group of Friends of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Schweizer, Germany) explained that responses to the information exchange of sample end use certificates (FSC.DEC/12/08) could include documents prepared by the exporting or importing party per the language in the decision, "end use certificate . . . or other pertinent documents."

#### Ukraine Melange

¶26. (SBU) The Conflict Prevention Center (Geertsen) reported a successful conference and site visits in early February for

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firms responding to the OSCE-Ukraine request for bids on the destruction of melange rocket fuel oxidizer. Geertsen said the project was still on track for melange elimination to begin in the summer.

#### Next Meeting

¶27. (U) The next FSC plenary and working groups will be on March 11. The Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting will

be on March 3-4.  
SCOTT